

Message Text

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VIENNA FOR IAEA

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TAGS: TGEN, TECH, EC

SUBJECT: URANIUM ENRICHMENT: FRENCH COMMUNIQUE APPROVING EURODIF
PROJECT

SUMMARY: FRENCH GOVERNMENT APPROVED EURODIF PROJECT, COMMITTED
ITSELF TO SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT OF PROJECT REGARDLESS OF
PARTICIPATION OF OTHER PARTNERS, AND LEFT OPENING FOR
COOPERATION WITH US. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TRANSLATION OF THE COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY
THE FRENCH PRIME MINISTER ON NOVEMBER 23:

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"THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT IS CONVINCED OF THE NECESSITY THAT THE

EUROPEAN NATIONS PUT THEMSELVES IN A POSITION TO INCREASE THE ENERGY INDEPENDENCE OF EUROPE NOTABLY IN DEVELOPING THE PRODUCTION OF NUCLEAR ENERGY. FOR ARRIVING AT THIS POSITION, THESE COUNTRIES MUST HAVE AT THEIR DISPOSAL THE CAPABILITY OF PRODUCING URANIUM ENRICHMENT TO GUARANTEE THEIR NEEDS.

IN CONSEQUENCE IT APPROVES THE PROJECT PRESENTED BY EURODIF ENVISAGING THE CONSTRUCTION IN EUROPE OF A PLANT FOR ISOTOPIC SEPARATION BY GASEOUS DIFFUSION REACHING A CAPACITY OF 9 MILLION SEPARATIVE WORK UNITS. IT GIVES A MANDATE TO THE COMMISSARIAT A L'ENERGIE ATOMIQUE (CEA) TO PARTICIPATE IN IT. THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT HOPES THAT THE OTHER MEMBERS OF EURODIF WILL BE ABLE TO TAKE PARALLEL DECISIONS WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY AND THAT OTHER PARTNERS WILL JOIN THEM.

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE TIMETABLE FIXED BY THE USERS FOR THEIR SUPPLIES OF ENRICHED URANIUM, THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT CONFIRMS FROM NOW ON THAT A GASEOUS DIFFUSION PLANT WILL BE DEVELOPED STARTING ON JANUARY 1, 1974 FOR ENTRY INTO PRODUCTION IN 1979. IT PUTS FORWARD, FOR WHAT CONCERNS ITS PART, ITS GUARANTEE OF THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THESE EFFORTS.

THIS DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT POSE AN OBSTACLE TO THE FULL CONCENTRATION WHICH WOULD PERMIT INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE TIMETABLE FOR DEVELOPING THE PLANT.

THE FRENCH DECISION IS MADE IN LINE WITH THE PROPOSITIONS OF THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS JUST RECEIVED A NOTE FROM THE GERMAN, BRITISH AND DUTCH GOVERNMENTS PROPOSING THAT THERE BE STUDIES OF THE CENTRIFUGE PROJECT WHICH COULD LEAD TO THE CREATION IN FRANCE OF AN ENRICHMENT CAPACITY BY THIS PROCESS.

THIS INITIATIVE COULD BE PLACED IN LINE WITH COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO PROCESSES TO WHICH THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY INDICATED THAT IT IS FAVORABLE AND WHICH COULD TAKE ON DIFFERENT FORMS OF WHICH IT (GOF) IS READY TO DISCUSS.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH A CONSULTATION MUST NATURALLY BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COHERENT WITH THE DECISION TAKEN IN COMMON BY THE PARTNERS OF EURODIF."

2. COMMENT: IN ADDITION TO COMMITTING GOF STRONGLY TO EURODIF PROJECT, COMMUNIQUE IS INTERESTING OWING TO ITS UNILATERAL CHARACTER AND ITS PURPOSEFUL OPENING FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION. GOF NOT ONLY APPROVES EURODIF PROJECT BUT ALSO GUARANTEES FOR ITS PART ITS SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION.

IT "HOPES THAT THE OTHER MEMBERS ARE ABLE TO TAKE PARALLEL DECISIONS" BUT IN NO WAY HEDGES ITS COMMITMET ON THAT POSSIBILITY. REGARDING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL AND SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT CHARBONNEL IN HIS ANNOUNCEMENT TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY USEDSAME WORDING EXCEPT THAT HE ADDED A PHRASE THAT BROADENS ITS APPLICATION. HE SAID "WHICH WOULD PERMIT A GREATER INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE BASIC PLAN OF TECHNOLOGYAND STRUCTURE." THE PHRASE "INTER-NATIONAL COOPERATION" IN THE ABOVE CONTEXTS IMPLIES COOPERATION WITH US. END COMMENT.
IRWIN

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